

REMARKS

This application pertains to novel adhesive tapes comprising an unmasticated natural rubber hot -melt pressure sensitive adhesive.

Claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 14-16 are pending; claim 13 being cancelled by this amendment.

Claim 13 stands objected to for improper dependency. This claim has now been cancelled, and the objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8 and 13-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso et al. The Examiner views the Hitachi reference as disclosing masking tapes with natural rubber adhesives, wherein the natural rubber is mixed with thermally reactive resins and polyfunctional isocyanates, polyfunctional (meth) acrylates, hydrocarbon tackifiers, fillers, plasticizers and age inhibitors. The Examiner turns to Yarusso for specific amounts of various components.

As pointed out by Applicants at page 2, paragraph beginning at line 9, all of the known processes for the solvent-free preparation and processing of pressure sensitive rubber adhesives are distinguished by very extensive rubber breakdown, i.e., by mastication. See also page 15, paragraph beginning on line 9.

The Hitachi reference provides absolutely no details of how the adhesive compositions disclosed therein are produced, and those skilled in the art would read Hitachi as involving the mastication of the natural rubber products.

The adhesive produced by Hitachi would therefore be understood to be a masticated natural rubber product.

Applicants, by contrast, have discovered a way to produce an unmasticated natural rubber hot-melt pressure sensitive adhesive (page 20, paragraph beginning at line 22; claim 1).

Hitachi, of course, uses solvents (see page 5, line 1 of translation). Those skilled in the art would know from this that the adhesive coming out of the Hitachi process must contain solvents because such persons know it is impossible to completely remove the solvents from the adhesive.

Applicants' adhesive packaging tape, by contrast, would contain no solvents because it is made without solvents.

Applicants' adhesive packaging tape is therefore different from anything that could be derived from the Hitachi reference in at least two different ways:

- Applicants' adhesive packaging tape comprises unmasticated natural rubber, and

- Applicants' adhesive packaging tape is solvent-free.

Nothing in Hitachi or Yarusso would teach or suggest anything at all about even the possibility of an unmasticated solvent-free natural rubber adhesive. The rejection of claims 1-2, 4, 6, 8 and 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso et al should accordingly now be withdrawn.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of The Wiggins Teape Group Limited. The Examiner turns to The Wiggins Teape Group Ltd. reference for the use of a primer layer. No primer layer could overcome the differences from the invention defined by Applicants' claims and anything that could be found in the Hitachi/Yarusso combination of references, however. The rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of The Wiggins Teape Group Limited should accordingly now be withdrawn.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of Müssig et al. The Examiner looks to Müssig et al for corona or flame pretreatment. Such pretreatment will not overcome the differences between Applicants' novel adhesive tape and anything that is taught or suggested in the Hitachi/Yarusso combination of references, however. The rejection of Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in

view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of Müssig et al should accordingly now be withdrawn.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of Yamamoto et al. The Examiner relies on Yamamoto et al for the use of photoinitiators. Photoinitiators cannot in any way overcome the differences pointed out above, however, and the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Hitachi Kasei Kogyo in view of Yarusso as applied above and further in view of Yamamoto et al. should accordingly be withdrawn.

In view of the present amendments and remarks it is believed that claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 14-16 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of said claims by the Examiner is respectfully requested and the allowance thereof is courteously solicited. Should the Examiner not deem the present amendment and remarks to place the instant claims in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment Under Rule 116 be entered for the purpose of placing the prosecution record in better condition for appeal.

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME


If any extension of time for this response is required, Applicants request that this be considered a petition therefor. Please charge the required petition fee to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

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Please charge any insufficiency of fee or credit any excess to Deposit Account

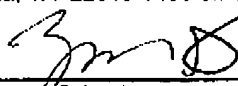
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Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile, no. 571-273-8300 to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on October 21, 2005.

By 
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Date October 21, 2005